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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-03 MCT-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 /094 W
----------091677 070611Z /11/64
P 061525Z JUN 78 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3484
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USMISSION USUN NY
DIA WASHDC
USCINCEUR//ECJ2-W/N//J-2//
EUDAC VAIHINGEN FRG
CINCUSAFE//IN//INOM/INCF//
CINCUSAREUR//AEAGB-C(CM)//AEAGB-PDN(CURIN)
CINCUSNAVEUR//N-2//
COMSIXTHFLT
FICEURLANT NORVA
FOSIF ROTA SP
USDAO JIDDA SA
USDAO DAMASCUS SY
USDAO AMMAN JO
USDAO BEIRUT
USDAO CAIRO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI
COMIPAC HONOLULU HI
NPIC WASHDC
HQ SAC OFFUTT AFB NE
HQ SAC INTEL OPS CENTER OFFUTT AFB

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7187

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y INFO ADDEES ADDED

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR MARR IS LE PLO SY
SUBJECT: IDF DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE COMMENTS ON LEBANESE
DEVELOPMENTS

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1. IN THE COURSE OF A JUNE 2 MEETING, MAJOR GEN. GAZIT, IDF DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, MADE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON.

2. SYRIAN MOVE TO THE LITANI: COMMENTING ON THE REPORTED SARKIS-ASSAD AGREEMENT FOR THE DEPLOYMENT OF SYRIAN TROOPS DOWN TO THE LITANI, GAZIT STATED THAT THE GOI IS SHARPLY DIVIDED ON WHETHER TO ALLOW SUCH A MOVE. ACCORDING TO GAZIT, SUCH A SYRIAN DEPLOYMENT WOULD NOT CONSTITUTE A SIGNIFICANT MILITARY THREAT TO ISRAEL AT THIS POINT DUE TO THE PRESENCE
IN THE SOUTH OF UNIFIL. HOWEVER, THE POLITICAL IMPACT OF SUCH A SYRIAN MOVE WOULD BE VERY SERIOUS.
GAZIT PHRASED THE ISRAELI DILEMMA ON WHETHER TO ALLOW THE SYRIANS TO MOVE SOUTH AS A CHOICE BETWEEN THE COMMON COLD (THE CURRENT SITUATION) AND CANCER (SYRIAN DDPLOYMENT TO THE LITANI). HE NOTED THAT EVEN IF THE SYRIANS WERE TO MOVE TO THE LITANI, THIS WOULD STILL LEAVE OPEN THE QUESTION OF TYRE, AND THIS TOWN WOULD HAVE TO BE CONTRLLED BY A PARTY OTHER THAN THE PLO BEFORE THE SITUATION TO THE SOUTH COULD BE STABILIZED.

3. ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL: GAZIT SAW A PARALLEL BETWEEN JUNE 13, 1978 AND MAY 15, 1948. HE STATED THAT ALL SIDES ARE WAITING FOR ISRAEL TO PULL OUT OF SOUTHERN LEBANON.
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A VACUUM WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE CREATED AND ONLY TIME WILL TEL HOW IT WILL BE FILLED.

4. PLO INFILTRATION: GAZIT SAID IDF INFORMATION IS THAT ARAFAT HAS BEEN INFILTRATING FATAH AND OTHER PALESTINIAN ELEMENTS INTO THE AREAS EVACUATED BY THE IDF. CURRENT ESTIMATES ARE OF APPROXIMATELY 300 TERRORISTS IN THOSE AREAS.

5. UNIFIL: HE TERMED UNIFIL A COLLECTION OF FINE SOLDIERS WITHOUT THE AUTHORITY TO DO ANYTHING.
HE CONSIDERED THIS TO BE A DISGRACEFUL SITUATION IN WHICH TO PUT GOOD SOLDIERS. HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT UNIFIL HAD PERFORMED MUCH BETTER THAN
THE IDF EXPECTED.

6. PROSPECTS FOR LEBANON: GAZIT AGREED WITH ASSESSMENTS THAT GENERAL KHOURY IN LEBANON IS TRYING TO BUILD A REPRE-SENTATIVE NATIONAL ARMY AND THAT MOST ELEMENTS IN LEBANON IDENTIFY THE PLO AS THE OBSTACLE TO LEBANON'S RECOVERY. HOWEVER, IN HIS VIEW LEBANON WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DEVELOP AN ARMY THAT CAN FACE UP TO THE PLO IN THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

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ANY EQUIPMENT THE US PROVIDES TO THE LEBANESE
ARMY WILL SOONER OR LATER FALL INTO THE HANDS OF ONE OR
ANOTHER OF THE FACTIONS. HE BELIEVED LEBANON WILL BE A HOPELESS
CASE FOR THE NEXT 30-50 YEARS. "ISRAEL JUST WANTS TO
ESTABLISH A STATUS QUO THAT ENSURES THEIR BORDER AND SETTLE-
MENTS IN THE NORTH ARE NOT SUBJECT TO ATTACK OR INFLUENCE
FROM THE TURBULENCE THAT WILL OCCURE IN LEBANON."

7. HADDAD: GAZIT CLOSED HIS COMMENTS ON SOUTHERN LEBANON
BY STATING THAT HADDAD IS THE ONLY REAL CHARACTER OR
PERSONALITY IN LEBANON. HE SAID HADDAD HAS REAL GUTS-
AT PRESENT HE DOESN'T CARE FOR ANY ONE (COMMENT: READ
HADDAD IS NOT CONTROLLED BY ANYONE).

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8 COMMENT: WHEN ASKED TO FORECAST EVENTS OF THE NEXT
FEW DAYS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON, GAZIT SOMEWHAT QUIZZICALLY
RESPONDED HE COULD NOT FORECAST EVEN HIS OWN TENURE IN
OFFICE. WITH LITTLE PRODDING, GAZIT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT HE
WAS NOT TOO HAPPY WITH BEING EXTENDED AS DMI. IN DATT'S
OPINION ABOVE VIEWS ARE MOST LIKELY THE RESULT OF GEN.
GAZIT'S MOOD OF THE MOMENT AND REFLECT HIS ABILITY TO
PROJECT A WORST CASE SCENARIO. EVEN AS SUCH, THEY
REFLECT ONE END OF THE SPECTRUM THAT THE ISRAELIS PERCEIVE
IN EVALUATING THE PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE AND SHOULD NOT
BE LIGHTLY DISCARDED OR DISCOUNTED.
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